

Pinero's Satire, Which the British Criticised, Goes Well Over Here

Not at All Bad; in Fact, Many American Society Leaders Are Worse.



New York Didn't Like the New Irish Play by Mr. Synge, However.

(BY EMORY B. CALVERT)
New York, N. Y., Sept. 14.—About the time that Synge's Irish play, "The Playboy of the Western World," attracted the carrots, cabbages and cantankerous comment of Celtic censors on this side of the water, virtuous London rose in its wrath and threw many bloomin' epithets at Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's characterization of the musical comedy stage.

Pinero has long been regarded as England's foremost playwright. His successes are many and varied and his name emblazoned on a British theater front is a guarantee to the management that the pounds and shillings and sovereigns of the tight little island will flow into the box office right plentifully. Yet despite this hard won reputation it is doubtful whether "The Mind the Paint Girl" would have achieved its worldwide fame without the excellent advertising afforded by British virtue.

In fact, its New York production makes it probable that the portion of the play which offended the British prudery was rather a reference to British aristocracy than the racy character of its lines. Indeed, Sir Arthur seems to have gone out of his way to describe a fledgling nobleman in love with the Paint Girl in terms little in keeping with the clear cut stage appearance of that young man and to refer to the knighted social strata as a class "without a chin or forehead between them."

These, in truth, are cruel, harsh words, but possess little sting when compared with the vitriolic sallies of an American political candidate in the course of a street corner conversation with a friend. So much for the "shocking" propriety of the piece. In construction it shows the art of Pinero, but fails of that pithiness that

goes to make up the really great and unpegged comedy. Lily Parrell, a Cockney girl of humble origin, has become famous through her song, "Mind the Paint." supposed to have been sung at the Pandora theater, London, which, by the way, houses British musical comedy in its most virulent form. Of course, she immediately ascends that throne accorded to beauty in Great Britain. The scatter brained nobility, the out at elbows adventurers, the aged gallants and the scheming stage folk flock to her shrine.

But Lily, nee our Billie Burke, "knows how to take care of herself" and amply proves that assertion in the scenes that follow. Therefore, out of this conglomerate mass of suitors she selects a somewhat old though none the less arduous admirer, one Capt. Jeyes, played by H. E. Herbert. Jeyes, ruins himself financially through his blind love for the girl and she, with true feminine carelessness, chooses to carry on a flirtation with a young guardsman, the Viscount

Francome. A party is given in honor of the musical comedy star and Francome, the favored suitor, is allowed to escort the beauty to her home. There he proposes and is reluctantly rejected on the score of social incompatibility. Jeyes follows close upon the proposal, accusing his erstwhile sweetheart of duplicity, and baring the financial distress to which his extravagances have driven him. Lily agrees to marry the captain in order to mitigate in some slight degree the harm she has unwittingly done him, but the military gallant, in a strong scene, pledges his regeneration, departs for the colonies and leave Lily and her viscount clasped in each other's arms. The play deals largely with types and as a characterization of the stage and its people it is most valuable. Pinero seemingly having given free rein to his charming portion of his art. On the whole it is a bright and refreshing piece of dramatic ingenuity and is well acted by Miss Burke and her support.

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